

Message Text

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ACTION ACDA-19

INFO OCT-01 EUR-25 ISO-00 CIAE-00 PM-07 INR-10 L-03

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FM USDEL MBFR VIENNA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 0208

SECDEF WASHDC

INFO USMISSION NATO

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AMEMBASSY LONDON

USNMR SHAPE

USCINCEUR

S E C R E T SECTION 1 OF 2 MBFR VIENNA 0117

MBFR NEGOTIATIONS

FROM US REP MBFR

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: APRM, NATO

SUBJECT: MBFR NEGOTIATIONS: DISCUSSION WITH
SOVIET REP JUNE 25, 1974

FOLLOWING REPORT ON DISCUSSION BETWEEN SOVIET REP
KHLESTOV AND US DEPREP WAS CIRCULATED IN AD
HOC GROUP ON JUNE 27.

1. BEGIN SUMMARY: IN DISCUSSION WITH US DEPREP ON
JUNE 25 ON MARGIN OF SOCIAL OCCASION, SOVIET REP
KHLESTOV PRESENTED VIEWS ON PRESENT TACTICAL SITUA-
TION IN VIENNA TALKS. KHLESTOV CLAIMED HE WAS
GENUINELY SURPRISED BY ALLIED REBUFF IN JUNE 25

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INFORMAL SESSION OF EASTERN CONCEPT OF FIRST STEP

AGREEMENT. HE INSISTED EAST WAS NOT SEEKING TO PUSH PRE-CONDITIONS FOR SOLUTION OF AGREED QUESTION OF WHOSE FORCES SHOULD BE REDUCED FROM OUTSET, BUT THAT THE SOLUTION OF THIS QUESTION MIGHT BE DIFFERENT DEPENDING ON WHETHER IT WAS RESULT OF EFFORT TO RECONCILE OVERALL NEGOTIATING APPROACHES OF EAST AND WEST WAS INTENDED FOR USE IN SIMPLIFIED FIRST STEP AGREEMENT. KHLESTOV EXPRESSED VIEW THAT, IN ANY EVENT, EVEN TENTATIVE RESOLUTION OF THE ISSUE OF WHOSE FORCES SHOULD BE REDUCED FROM OUTSET WOULD DEPEND ON AT LEAST PARTIAL RESOLUTION OF ISSUE OF SIZE AND TYPE OF REDUCTION. END SUMMARY.

2. IN CONVERSATION ON MARGIN OF SOCIAL OCCASION JUNE 25, SOVIET REP KHLESTOV CLAIMED TO US DEPREP THAT HE AND HIS EASTERN COLLEAGUES HAD BEEN GENUINELY SURPRISED AT ALLIED REBUFF OF EASTERN FIRST STEP PROPOSAL IN INFORMAL SESSION EARLIER THAT DAY. KHLESTOV SAID HE WAS SERIOUS IN TRYING TO CONCEIVE OF OR FIGURE OUT SOME INITIAL STEP WHICH WOULD BE TOLERABLE FOR ALL AS A WAY OF GETTING THE NEGOTIATING PROCESS LAUNCHED. THE PROBLEMS INVOLVED IN THE VIENNA NEGOTIATIONS WERE SO INTRACTABLE THAT A SIMPLIFIED FIRST STEP SEEMED A PRACTICAL NECESSITY.

3. KHLESTOV INSISTED THAT SOVIETS WERE NOT ATTEMPTING TO POSE ANY PRE-CONDITIONS WHATEVER FOR SOLUTION OF THE AGREED QUESTION OF WHOSE FORCES SHOULD BE REDUCED FROM THE OUTSET. IT WAS JUST THAT THE ANSWER OR A SOLUTION TO THIS QUESTION MIGHT BE DIFFERENT IF ONE WERE THINKING OF A SIMPLIFIED FIRST STEP OR IF ONE WERE THINKING OF THE ARDUOUS PROCESS OF TRYING TO RECONCILE ALL THE DEEP-ROOTED DIFFERENCES IN THE OVERALL PROGRAMS OF EAST AND WEST.

4. US DEPREP ASKED WHY EAST SHOULD BE SURPRISED AT WESTERN ATTITUDE TOWARD SOVIET FIRST STEP IDEA. HE POINTED OUT THAT THE CONTENT OF THE SOVIET FIRST STEP WAS IDENTICAL WITH THAT OF THE FIRST STAGE OF THE SOVIET DRAFT AGREEMENT AND OF THE SOVIET SYMBOLIC

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REDUCTION PROPOSAL, AND IN PARTICULAR CONTAINED THE TWO ESSENTIAL PRINCIPLES OF THE SOVIET DRAFT AGREEMENT, REDUCTIONS BY ALL IN THE FIRST STEP AND USE OF THE PRESENT RELATIONSHIP OF FORCES AS THE BASIS FOR REDUCTIONS. KHLESTOV SAID IT WOULD, OF COURSE, BE POSSIBLE TO SEEK COMPROMISES BETWEEN, AND TO TRY TO RECONCILE THE ENTIRE OVERALL PROGRAMS OF BOTH SIDES. BUT THIS WOULD BE A VERY ARDUOUS AND LENGTHY PROCESS. A LIMITED AND

SIMPLIFIED FIRST STEP WAS NECESSARY. IF THE WEST DID NOT LIKE THE CONTENT OF THE FIRST STEP AS HE HAD SKETCHED IT, ALLIED REPS COULD SUPPLY THEIR OWN CONTENT.

5. KHESTOV SAID THAT IT WAS IN ANY EVENT UNREALISTIC TO BELIEVE THAT THE QUESTION OF WHOSE FORCES SHOULD BE REDUCED FROM THE OUTSET COULD BE EVEN TENTATIVELY RESOLVED UNLESS SOME AT LEAST PARTIAL RESOLUTION OF THE QUESTION OF THE SIZE AND TYPE OF REDUCTIONS HAD ALSO BEEN REACHED. HE SAID HE WAS NOT TRYING TO BE DIFFICULT OR TO POSE PRE-CONDITIONS, BUT WAS ONLY REFLECTING A GENERAL LAW OF NEGOTIATION. NEGOTIATORS DID NOT REACH FINAL UNDERSTANDINGS ON ONE TOPIC UNLESS THEY GOT SOME SATISFACTION ON OTHERS.

6. US DEPREP EXPLAINED THAT ALLIES DID NOT EXPECT FORMAL ACCEPTANCE ON PART OF SOVIETS OF ALLIED POSITION ON PHASING, BUT ONLY A TENTATIVE AGREEMENT, AFTER WHICH DISCUSSION COULD MOVE ON TO TREATMENT OF SIZE AND TYPE OF REDUCTIONS. THE PROSPECTS FOR THE TREATMENT OF THE LATTER SUBJECT WOULD BE MUCH IMPROVED IF THERE HAD BEEN PREVIOUS TENTATIVE UNDERSTANDING ON THE FIRST QUESTION. US DEPREP POINTED OUT THAT BECAUSE SOVIET FIRST STEP CONTAINED ESSENCE OF EASTERN REDUCTION PROGRAM, IT WOULD BE NO EASIER TO REACH AGREEMENT ON IT THAN ON AN OVERALL AGREEMENT. MOREOVER, HE CONSIDERED THERE WERE REASONABLE PROSPECTS OF REACHING AGREEMENT ON AN OVERALL REDUCTION AGREEMENT, SO THAT THIS ROUTE SHOULD BE GIVEN A FAIR TRY.

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MBFR NEGOTIATIONS

FROM US REP MBFR

7. KHLESTOV SAID BOTH SIDES NEEDED AN INITIAL SUCCESS IN THE NEGOTIATIONS IN ORDER TO SUSTAIN THEM OVER THE DIFFICULT ROAD AHEAD OF TACKLING THE MORE FUNDAMENTAL QUESTIONS. US DEPREP SAID THIS MIGHT BE THE CASE BUT THIS SHOULD BE MORE EASILY SOUGHT IN SOME TENTATIVE UNDERSTANDING ON A TOPIC LIKE WHOSE FORCES SHOULD BE REDUCED FROM THE OUTSET THAN IN A COMPLETE INITIAL AGREEMENT, NO MATTER HOW SIMPLIFIED. ANY AGREEMENT WOULD HAVE TO RESOLVE QUESTIONS OF PARTICIPATION, TYPE REDUCTIONS, AND BASIS FOR REDUCTIONS.

8. KHLESTOV SOLICITOUSLY INQUIRED AS TO CONGRESSIONAL PRESSURES FOR UNILATERAL TROOP WITHDRAWAL FROM EUROPE. US DEPREP SAID HE CONSIDERED THAT THE HIGH
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POINT OF POLITICAL AND PUBLIC SENTIMENT WITHIN THE UNITED STATES FOR DISENGAGEMENT FROM EXTERNAL DEFENSE RESPONSIBILITIES HAD PASSED.

9. KHLESTOV SAID HE EXPECTED LITTLE BUSINESS IN VIENNA UNTIL THE PRESENT NIXON-BREZHNEV VISIT WAS COMPLETED.

10. ON JUNE 19, US DEPREP HAD BRIEF CONVERSATION WITH GDR REP WHICH PARALLELED KHLESTOV REMARKS ON ONE POINT. GDR REP EMPHASIZED THAT, FROM VIEWPOINT OF EAST, IT WOULD BE EXTREMELY DIFFICULT TO RESOLVE QUESTION OF WHOSE FORCES SHOULD BE REDUCED FROM THE OUTSET BEFORE EAST RECEIVED SOME SATISFACTION ON ISSUE OF SIZE AND TYPE OF REDUCTIONS. COMMENT: THE REMARKS OF BOTH KHLESTOV AND OESER ON THIS SUBJECT CONFIRM THAT EAST IS SEEKING TO MAKE A LINK BETWEEN THE TWO SUBJECTS OF WHOSE FORCES ARE TO BE REDUCED AND THE CONTENT OF REDUCTIONS. IF THE LOGIC OF THEIR

ARGUMENT IS TAKEN INTO ACCOUNT IT WOULD FOLLOW THAT EASTERN
REPS ARE ALSO SAYING THAT THEY MIGHT THEORE-
TICALLY BE WILLING TO GO FURTHER THAN AT PRESENT ON
PHASING ISSUE. END COMMENT.RESOR

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